

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method for processing a message in a network computing system
2 including a facsimile transmission comprised of a recipient contact address and
3 message content, wherein the message content includes at least one of message text
4 and attached files, comprising:
5 managing multiple facsimile transmission as fax jobs in multiple fax
6 management systems;
7 transferring the message content from the multiple fax management systems to
8 a rendering computer;
9 launching, with the rendering computer, at least one application program to
10 convert the message content from the multiple fax jobs to images in a file format;
11 transferring, with the rendering computer, the converted message content in
12 the file format to the fax management system that sent the message content to the
13 rendering computer; and
14 transferring, with the fax management systems, the message content in the file
15 format to one of multiple communication ports for transmittal to the recipient contact
16 address.

1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 transferring, with the fax management servers, job numbers assigned to the
3 fax jobs to the conversion computer; and
4 requesting, with the rendering computer, the message content for the job
5 numbers, wherein the fax management servers transfer the message content in
6 response to receiving the request from the rendering computer.

1 3. The method of claim 2, further comprising:
2 maintaining, with the fax management servers, job tables including fax job
3 records identified by job number; and

4 changing, with the fax management servers, state fields in the fax job records
5 to manage the workflow of the fax jobs between the first computing system, second
6 computing systems, and communication port.

1 4. The method of claim 2, wherein the message including the facsimile
2 transmission further includes sender information for the sender of the fax job, wherein
3 the rendering computer generates the content of each attachment and message text
4 into images in the file format, further comprising:
5 using the sender information to access fax cover page information for the fax
6 jobs;
7 generating a cover page image in the file format from the fax cover page
8 information if there is fax cover page information for the sender of the fax job; and
9 transmitting the converted fax cover page image to the fax management
10 computer that sent the job number.

1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the file format comprises an image
2 file format, and wherein the message content is converted to one or more images in
3 the file format.

1 6. The method of claim 1, wherein for each attachment file received from
2 the fax management computers, the rendering computer further performs:
3 determining one of multiple application programs capable of opening the
4 attachment file; and
5 using the determined application program to convert the content of the
6 attachment file to one or more images in the file format, wherein all the images in the
7 file format comprising the at least one converted attachment file are transferred to the
8 first computing system.

1 7. The method of claim 6, further comprising converting, with the
2 rendering computer, the message text to at least one image in the file format, wherein
3 the images comprising the converted attachment files are arranged in a file in the file
4 format according to an order in which they were attached to the message and follow
5 one image comprising the converted message text.

1 8. The method of claim 6, further comprising maintaining, with the
2 rendering computer, multiple application programs open to concurrently convert the
3 content of different attachment files for fax jobs from multiple fax management
4 computers to images in the file format.

1 9. The method of claim 6, further comprising using, with the rendering
2 computer, one application program to concurrently convert the content of different
3 attachment files associated with the application program to images in the file format.

1 10. A network computing system for processing a message in a network
2 computing system including a facsimile transmission comprised of a recipient contact
3 address and message content, wherein the message content includes at least one of
4 message text and attached files in a network computing system, comprising:

5 (a) a plurality of fax management systems, each comprising a processor and a
6 memory coupled to the processor;

7 (b) a rendering computer comprising a processor and a memory coupled to the
8 processor;

9 (c) at least one communication port in communication with each fax
10 management system;

11 (d) fax management program logic residing in the memory of each fax
12 management system, wherein the fax management logic, when read and executed by
13 the fax management processors, performs:

- 14 (i) managing multiple facsimile transmission as fax jobs in multiple
15 fax management systems;
16 (ii) transferring the message content from the multiple fax
17 management systems to the rendering computer; and
18 (iii) transferring the message content in the file format received from
19 the rendering computer to one communication port for transmittal to the
20 recipient contact address; and
21 (e) rendering program logic residing in the rendering memory, wherein the
22 rendering program logic, when read and executed by the rendering computer
23 processor, performs:
24 (i) launching at least one application program to convert the message
25 content from the multiple fax jobs to images in a file format; and
26 (ii) transferring the converted message content in the file format to the
27 fax management system that sent the message content to the rendering
28 computer.

1 11. The network computing system of claim 10, wherein the fax
2 management program logic further performs transferring job numbers assigned to the
3 fax jobs to the conversion computer, and wherein the rendering program logic further
4 performs requesting the message content for the job numbers, wherein the fax
5 management servers transfer the message content in response to receiving the request
6 from the rendering computer.

1 12. The network computing system of claim 11, wherein the fax
2 management program logic further performs:
3 maintaining job tables including fax job records identified by job number; and

4 changing state fields in the fax job records to manage the workflow of the fax
5 jobs between the fax management system, the rendering computer, and
6 communication port.

1 13. The network computing system of claim 11, wherein the message
2 including the facsimile transmission further includes sender information for the
3 sender of the fax job, wherein the rendering program logic generates the content of
4 each attachment and message text into images in the file format, and wherein the
5 rendering program logic further performs:
6 using the sender information to access fax cover page information for the fax
7 jobs;
8 generating a cover page image in the file format from the fax cover page
9 information if there is fax cover page information for the sender of the fax job; and
10 transmitting the converted fax cover page image to the fax management
11 computer that sent the job number.

1 14. The network computing system of claim 10, wherein the file format
2 comprises an image file format, and wherein the message content is converted to one
3 or more images in the file format.

1 15. The network computing system of claim 10, wherein for each
2 attachment file received from the fax management computers, wherein the rendering
3 program logic further performs:
4 determining one of multiple application programs capable of opening the
5 attachment file; and
6 using the determined application program to convert the content of the
7 attachment file to one or more images in the file format, wherein all the images in the

8 file format comprising the at least one converted attachment file are transferred to the
9 first computing system.

1 16. The network computing system of claim 15, wherein the rendering
2 program logic further performs converting the message text to at least one image in
3 the file format, wherein the images comprising the converted attachment files are
4 arranged in a file in the file format according to an order in which they were attached
5 to the message and follow one image comprising the converted message text.

1 17. The network computing system of claim 15, wherein the rendering
2 program logic further performs maintaining multiple application programs open to
3 concurrently convert the content of different attachment files for fax jobs from
4 multiple fax management computers to images in the file format.

1 18. The network computing system of claim 15, wherein the rendering
2 program logic further performs using one application program to concurrently convert
3 the content of different attachment files associated with the application program to
4 images in the file format.

1 19. A signal-bearing medium containing a fax management program and
2 rendering program for processing a message in a network computing system including
3 a facsimile transmission comprised of a recipient contact address and message
4 content, wherein the message content includes at least one of message text and
5 attached files, wherein the fax management program is executed by multiple fax
6 management computers and the rendering program is executed by a rendering
7 computer to perform:

8 wherein the fax management program is capable of causing the fax
9 management computers to perform:

10 (i) managing multiple facsimile transmission as fax jobs in multiple
11 fax management systems;
12 (ii) transferring the message content to the rendering computer; and
13 (iii) transferring the message content in the file format to one of
14 multiple communication ports for transmittal to the recipient contact address;
15 and
16 wherein the rendering program is capable of causing the rendering computer
17 to perform:
18 launching at least one application program to convert the message content
19 from the multiple fax jobs to images in a file format; and
20 transferring the converted message content in the file format to the fax
21 management system that sent the message content to the rendering computer.

1 20. The signal bearing medium of claim 19,
2 wherein the fax management program performs transferring job numbers
3 assigned to the fax jobs to the rendering computer; and
4 wherein the rendering program further performs requesting the message
5 content for the job numbers, wherein the fax management servers transfer the
6 message content in response to receiving the request from the rendering computer.

1 21. The signal bearing medium of claim 20, wherein the fax management
2 software further performs:
3 maintaining job tables including fax job records identified by job number; and
4 changing state fields in the fax job records to manage the workflow of the fax
5 jobs between the fax management system, rendering computer, and communication
6 port.

1 22. The signal bearing medium of claim 20, wherein the message
2 including the facsimile transmission further includes sender information for the

3 sender of the fax job, wherein the rendering program generates the content of each
4 attachment and message text into images in the file format, and wherein the rendering
5 program further performs:
6 using the sender information to access fax cover page information for the fax
7 jobs;
8 generating a cover page image in the file format from the fax cover page
9 information if there is fax cover page information for the sender of the fax job; and
10 transmitting the converted fax cover page image to the fax management
11 computer that sent the job number.

1 23. The signal bearing medium of claim 19, wherein the file format
2 comprises an image file format, and wherein the message content is converted to one
3 or more images in the file format.

1 24. The signal bearing medium of claim 19, wherein for each attachment
2 file received from the fax management computers, the rendering program further
3 performs:
4 determining one of multiple application programs capable of opening the
5 attachment file; and
6 using the determined application program to convert the content of the
7 attachment file to one or more images in the file format, wherein all the images in the
8 file format comprising the at least one converted attachment file are transferred to the
9 first computing system.

1 25. The signal bearing medium of claim 24, wherein the rendering
2 program further performs converting the message text to at least one image in the file
3 format, wherein the images comprising the converted attachment files are arranged in

4 a file in the file format according to an order in which they were attached to the
5 message and follow one image comprising the converted message text.

1 26. The signal bearing medium of claim 24, wherein the rendering
2 program further performs maintaining multiple application programs open to
3 concurrently convert the content of different attachment files for fax jobs from
4 multiple fax management computers to images in the file format.

1 27. The signal bearing medium of claim 24, wherein the rendering
2 program further performs using one application program to concurrently convert the
3 content of different attachment files associated with the application program to
4 images in the file format.